

Abstract

The objective of the study titled “Knowledge Management of Community Fund and Community Enterprises at Chamrung Village, Klaeng Sub-district, Rayong Province” is to explore the knowledge management process in regard to the development of community fund and community enterprises at Chamrung Village, Klaeng sub-district, Rayong province. This qualitative study employs phenomenological approach. The data is collected through in-depth interviews with 30 villagers and a focus group of eight villagers representing the population in the area of Chamrung village, Noenkor sub-district, Klaeng district in Rayong province.

The study finds that the knowledge management in the village began as the first settlers moved in to area and adapted themselves for survival. Then, as the villagers became aware of the influx of capitalism and its negative impact on their ways of life, they therefore began to learn to adapt. Only then had knowledge management been introduced, which began with brainstorming and exchange of opinions as a means to solve community problems. This process was mobilised by kinship and patronage systems as well as community participation.

The implementation of knowledge management results in the reexamination of the local wisdom system, and in coalescing traditional with new knowledge learnt through exchange visits and trainings. Community council which was originally a place for discussion amongst leaders and community members is redefined as a forum to introduce new knowledges and to brainstorm how to best adopt them. Such hands-on practice in knowledge management leads to initiatives such as community fund and community enterprises that meet the people's ways of life and their true needs.

The execution of knowledge management of Chamrung villagers in regards to community fund and community enterprises take places in a varied number of forms, such as from knowledge transfers from one generation to another, study visits and training, knowledge synthesis through community council, and the public address system for dissemination.

The study also found that the key factors of knowledge management can be attributed to community leaders and voluntary members, who gather the cooperation from all members in the village. The kinship and the patronage systems in the community also contributed to such process through implementation of community development activities.

Overall, the knowledge management of Chamrung Village is regarded moderate. However, one aspect that can be improved is that youth and children can be further encouraged to comprehend the mechanisms which contribute to the learning process and knowledge management. This can lead to community development as well as opening up social space for discussion and allow for voices from the community's quieter population. Greater diverse exchange of opinions will enrich the community initiatives and became the supportive factors of the perfect community knowledge management.

The village's knowledge management has been conceived by the community itself based on the awareness of external influence. The people's way of life has now been changed to the self-empowerment, resisting such external factor and regaining the power of self-reliance in the community.

It is suggested that learning should be promoted qualitatively and thoroughly throughout the community. The community members should be capacitated to build their confidence and wider exchange of knowledge should be facilitated. At the policy level, the local authorities should promote the development of community council forum in all community, and empower the people to voice their concerns in formal events. Further research should be a comparative study between community and knowledge management synthesis.